

The Church Bell

The Newsletter of the

United Church of Christ, Congregational

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March 2010

“ENCOUNTERS”

by Elaine Miller, Assistant Pastor

All of the Wakonda pastors have two-point or more callings – we serve at least two congregations. Therefore sometimes decisions have to be made as to WHERE we each must be for the ecumenical services within the church year. That is true for Ash Wednesday.

It was discovered at the January ministerial meeting that I might be the only one available to lead the kid-friendly Ash Wednesday service for the community “Kids Under Construction” C.E. program. It’s a wonderful experience to share the ritual of imposition of ashes with those precious children. They love to hear the stories of God’s forgiveness that extends to everyone.

As a part of the time of preparation before receiving the ashes, we were talking about how we do or don’t say things, do or don’t do things that hurt others. The easiest examples always come quickly: brother/sister fights, not listening to parents, playground troubles. These are struggles of daily life for many. Then one of the youngest began to speak, **very** slowly, stammering at first as he thought of what he was going to say. It would have been easier to move on to another child’s response but thank heavens we waited.

“When we have lots of food, and other people have none.when we have so much food that we eat it all.and we eat so much sometimes that we even get sick, well, that’s not right. We should share our food with those who don’t have any.”

Oh, my goodness! “How old are you?” I asked him incredulously. “Twenty?” “No, I’m four!” he announced. I and the two adult leaders just looked at each other in surprise at this amazing insight from a four year old. A lesson for all of us!

So....in this Lenten season may we learn to wait patiently and listen intentionally for God’s surprising revelations and light for our lives.

MARCH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 7

Lent III

“At All Times”

Luke 21:29-38

Communion

March 14

Lent IV

“Dancing to Remember”

Matthew 11:15-19

March 21

Lent V

“Random Acts of Kindness”

Matthew 6:1-6

March 28

Palm/Passion Sunday

“Moving Forward”

Luke 9:51-62

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship will meet on Thursday, March 4th at 9:30 in the Mayflower Room. Hostesses will be Eileen Turner and Thelma Raines. Phyllis Noble will have devotions. Pastor Elaine Miller will be telling about her trip to Syria.

NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday morning, March 21st, we will be receiving new members into our church family. There will be an orientation gathering on Sunday night, March 14th, at 6:30 pm in the Mayflower Room. If you are interested in membership or know of someone who might be, please contact Steve, Elaine or any member of our Diaconate Board.

PRAYER SHAWL GROUP

The Prayer Shawl Ministry group will be meeting on Wednesday, March 17th at noon in the Mayflower Room. Bring a lunch. Everyone is welcome to join the group.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING – MARCH 21, 2010

On Sunday, March 21st, our congregation will have the opportunity to share monetary gifts with people less fortunate around the world through our One Great Hour of Sharing Lenten offering. One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is the relief, refugee and development fund of the United Church of Christ. It is a Special Mission Lenten Offering received by the United Church of Christ and is part of Our Churches Wider Mission (OCWM) carrying God's message of love and hope to people in more than 80 countries. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and healthcare, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. One Great Hour of Sharing also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. This year's theme is "Do you love me? – Feed my sheep." We are reminded that we are called to care for all who are in need, just as God cares for us. On Sunday, March 21st, special envelopes for One Great Hour of Sharing will be placed in your church bulletin. You may put your gift in the offering plate. If you are not present that morning, offerings can be dropped off at the church office any time before March 21st. You may read how your gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing have affected many people's lives on the website www.ucc.org/oghs/.

LENTEN DISCIPLINE – THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

The season of Lent is a time to refocus and remember who we are and who we hope to be as faithful, loving and spirit-filled people – a chance to "Be still and know..." Unfortunately, in our busy lives, we often forget! To this end our church will provide a reminder and invitation of these important ideas **each day during Lent** using technology (either e-mail or text). If you would like to be on this distribution list, please e-mail the church office with your request: uccv@uccvermillion.org.

DAFFODILS

Anyone who placed an American Cancer Society daffodils order may pick them up after worship on Sunday, March 21st. Please share their beauty with family, friends and strangers!

VMA LENTEN PRAYER 2010

The pastors of the Vermillion Ministerial Association would again like to invite you to join them for prayer each Friday during Lent. The group will gather shortly after noon (12:00 pm) for a brief prayer and reflection service and then share a simple soup lunch, concluding by 12:50 pm. The entire community is welcome as we prayerfully move through this holy season. The Lenten schedule is as follows:

March 5	First Methodist Church (16 N. Dakota Street)
March 12	United Church of Christ
March 19	Grace Baptist Church (1102 E. Main Street)
March 26	Trinity Lutheran Church (816 E. Clark Street)
April 2	First Baptist Church (101 E. Main Street)

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2010 South Dakota Conference UCC Annual Meeting will be hosted by First Congregational UCC in Watertown, SD beginning Friday, June 11th through Sunday, June 13th.

AUTOMATIC PLEDGE DEPOSITS AVAILABLE

For every family, payment of their pledge to the church is an act of generosity and love. There is something symbolic about opening your hand and placing gifts in the plate as it is passed on Sunday. We recognize, however, that we are becoming a paperless world and many of our members would appreciate the opportunity to transfer funds electronically. Participation is totally voluntary, but those wishing to make a bank transfer should contact Beth Lewison, Parish Steward, at the church office for a form.

VERMILLION FOOD PANTRY

Food items most needed at the Food Pantry (located at Trinity Lutheran Church, 816 E. Clark Street): jelly/jam, cold cereal, chili and chili beans, instant potatoes, box of stuffing mixes, Jell-O and pudding mixes, soda crackers, tomato soups, scalloped potatoes, cake mixes, hand soaps, peanut butter, fruit juices, chunky soups, pancake mixes, muffin mixes, motel shampoos, toilet paper – wrapped.

HAITI UPDATE

As of February 22, 2010, earthquake-related gifts sent to the UCC totaled \$1,304,864, which included \$425,737 in online donations. One of our partner organizations has assisted more than 150,000 people with direct aid: fresh water, sanitation efforts, shelter, meals, and food staples. Relief items and services continue to be distributed: family kits, hygiene sets, medical assistance and health clinic supplies.

The Mutual Support Program, an arm of the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti (CONASPEH), has already begun to help families with 6-month loans from \$100 to \$250 to re-establish their livelihoods for a day that Haitian does not work is a day they do not eat.

The hearts of those with ties to this beleaguered nation ask us to keep the people of Haiti in our prayers that within the tragedy there may be found some sustainable way of life. It is surely difficult for us to imagine ourselves in such a position. We give thanks for the Haitian people who teach us what it means to have faith. Thank you to each and everyone who has contributed to the funds in support of the relief efforts.

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE – March 28-April 4

Palm/Passion Sunday – March 28

Morning Worship

10:30 am –

sanctuary

Our adult choir, bell choir and other special musicians will share several choral pieces in a variety of styles that bridge the relationship between Christian spirituality and the five fundamentals of Islamic spirituality: creed, prayer, sharing, discipline, pilgrimage. This unique musical presentation will call us to open our lives to the rich blessing of our passion narrative and invites us into the sacred days of Holy Week.

Taize Prayer Service

8:00 pm – Danforth

Chapel

Holy Wednesday – March 31

LAF – Seder Meal – Passover Celebration

5:30 pm –

Pilgrim Room

Come and join our LAF celebration as we honor our Hebrew roots in the spirit of Seder and Passover. We begin with dinner for our whole church family in the Jewish style of Seder and then our children will present a program reminding us of the important stories of Exodus and Passover.

Maundy Thursday – April 1

Tenebrae and Communion

8:00 pm –

sanctuary

Tenebrae is the Latin word that means ‘shadows’, and with solemn dignity we will share this old service of song, story, and candlelight. A special communion service will also be held on this memorial of Jesus’ last supper with his friends.

Prayer Vigil

beginning at 9:00 pm –

sanctuary

Again this year, a unique prayer service is being organized in our church for the hours between Maundy Thursday evening and Easter morning sunrise, April 1-4, 2010. This traditional vigil, which is possible only through the efforts of our entire church family, offers individuals and small groups the chance to gather prayerfully in our sanctuary at various times throughout the Easter weekend. A burning candle is kept lit throughout this time as a sign of our faithfulness as we wait for the hope of resurrection. Our sign-up sheet will be in the sanctuary.

Good Friday – April 2

Prayer Vigil continues

sanctuary

VMA Prayer

Noon – First Baptist

Church

Holy Saturday – April 3

Prayer Vigil continues

sanctuary

Easter Sunday – April 4

Sunrise Service

6:15 am – Clay County

Park

Come and join our morning watch, as we await sunrise and the joyful news of resurrection by the river.

Easter Breakfast

7:15 am – Clay County

Park

Like the early disciples, come break bread together with other followers around the fire!

8:00 pm	Taize	Wednesday, March 31	
Monday, March 29		5:30 pm	LAF Seder Meal/Passover Celebration
7:00 pm	Mayflower Mondays		
Tuesday, March 30		7:00 pm	Adult Choir
6:00 pm	BC		

REMINDER

Don't forget Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 14th.

2010 PLACERVILLE CAMP SCHEDULE

The Summer Camp schedule from Placerville (our UCC church camp) has arrived with lots of opportunities. Brochures are available in the narthex and the church office for anyone who is interested.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Event Name</u>	<u>Camp Fee before June 1</u>	<u>Camp Fee after June 1</u>	<u>Grade Completed</u>
June 14-18	Women's Camp	\$175	\$200	19 and up
June 14-18	Shining Stars	\$150	\$175	2 nd – 3 rd Grades
June 14-18	God's Lambs	\$75	\$100	up to 1 st Grade
June 20-25	Seekers**	\$250	\$275	4 th and 5 th Grades
June 25-27	Grand Camp	\$75/adult \$60/youth \$100/\$85 For youth ages 3-10		
July 11-16	Faith Explorers**	\$250	\$275	6 th – 8 th Grades
July 25-31`	Family Camp	\$210	\$235	All
	\$15/year up to age 12 – \$700 Immediate Family Max Cost			
August 1-7	Crossroads**	\$280	\$305	9 th – 12 th Grades
Nov. 19-21	Fall Youth Event	\$80		7 th – 12 th Grades,
	- Deadline Nov. 10	\$50	Chaperones	

** Transportation provided for additional fee for these camps only.